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TAGS: [PREL](#), [PREF](#), [MOPS](#), [IZ](#), [KU](#)

SUBJECT: COURTESY CALL ON THE INTERIOR MINISTER REVEALS
CONFUSION ON BORDER MOU, THINKING ON IPR, TERRORISTS, AND
THE COURT SYSTEM

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (a) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary and Comment: During the Ambassador's introductory call on Interior Minister Shaykh Nawaf, the Minister was unable to clarify status of the border MOU with the U.S. military. Shaykh Nawaf insisted the signed agreement had been returned to the MFA for further action, but he had no additional information. On IPR, he stated that police were aggressively working to stop the trafficking of counterfeit goods, particularly audio and video materials. Commenting on jihadi court cases, Shaykh Nawaf said the police's ability to catch jihadis was not always matched by the Ministry of Justice's ability to prosecute them. He made clear his belief that cases were handled appropriately and that no one, regardless of position or connections, could influence the outcome of a trial. Despite his strong convictions, Shaykh Nawaf came across as someone not fully in touch with his own Ministry. On several issues, he seemed unaware of the basic facts that the Ambassador raised and relied heavily on his General Manager to provide him with the answers. Post will continue to engage Shaykh Nawaf on bilateral issues, but will rely on and further expand our network of senior and working-level MOI and police contacts. End Summary and Comment.

The Good News

¶2. (C) The Ambassador opened his November 8 call on Interior Minister and First Deputy Prime Minister Shaykh Nawaf Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah by thanking him for his strong support of U.S. interests, notably: cooperation of the Criminal Investigation Department (the Kuwaiti FBI counterpart) with the LEGATT in Riyadh, security escorts for OIF convoys traveling to and from the Iraq border, good use of DS training for MOI officials, and provision of Ambassador's security detail. The Ambassador also noted the improved information exchange with KSS.

¶3. (C) The Ambassador said that speedy conclusion of the Customs and Border MOU with the U.S. would open another area for bilateral cooperation. Shaykh Nawaf expressed confusion about the status of the MOU and questioned, in Arabic, MOI General Manager Brigadier General Hamed Al-Jumah why it was still an issue. The General assured Shaykh Nawaf the MOU had been signed and delivered to the Foreign Ministry "some time ago." While still uncertain about the status and actual location of the MOU, the Shaykh attempted to reassure the Ambassador that he and FM Shaykh Dr. Mohammed were in touch on the matter and that the MOI was not an obstacle to MOU implementation. (Note: A meeting with the Foreign Minister immediately afterward did not clarify the status of the MOU.)

Fighting Against Fakes

¶4. (SBU) On intellectual property rights (IPR) protection, the Ambassador requested greater protection and enforcement. Shaykh Nawaf asserted his commitment to fighting counterfeiters and said that he had implemented a program last year targeted at stopping them. He added that he was also involving local governorates in the fight and he was keen to capture the criminals involved.

Jihadis and The Courts

¶5. (C) The Ambassador then asked about terrorists in Kuwait and the MOI's role in capturing and bringing them to trial; making it clear that the USG disagreed with Kuwaiti attempts to deal with terrorists through family or tribal pressure. In a vague and ambiguous answer, the Minister responded that "real terrorists are those who influence the infrastructure of a country" and restated his determination to fight terrorism and maintain peace and stability in Kuwait. He added that the MOI's role is to capture terrorists, but it is up to the Ministry of Justice to impose punishment. The Minister affirmed his belief in the independence of the judiciary and argued that no one can influence the outcome of a court case.

16. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.

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LeBaron